

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 026046

FOL REPEAT PRAGUE 251 SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO BERLIN
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QTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRAGUE 0251

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ETRD, CZ, UR

SUBJECT: CZECHOSLOVAK-SOVIET TRADE

1. A HIGH-LEVEL DELEGATION HEADED BY DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND HEAD OF STATE PLANNING COMMISSION VACLAV HULA, AND INCLUDING MINISTERS OF GENERAL AND HEAVY ENGINEERING, FOREIGN TRADE, AND TECHNOLOGY VISITED MOSCOW JANUARY 26-28 TO MEET WITH SOVIET COUNTERPARTS.

2. MAIN PURPOSE OF TRIP WAS APPARENTLY TO MAKE FINAL DECISIONS REQUIRED TO COORDINATE CZECHOSLOVAK AND SOVIET 1976-1980 ECONOMIC PLANS. COMMUNIQUE ISSUED ON TALKS SAYS TWO SIDES DISCUSSED FULFILLMENT OF AGREEMENTS AND ACCORDS REACHED DURING NOVEMBER, 1975, TALKS (HEADED BY HUSAK, STROUGAL, BREZHNEV, AND KOSYGIN), AND ELABORATED CORRESPONDING CONCRETE MEASURES FOR THEIR TIMELY REALIZATION. THERE IS AT LEAST A HINT THAT SOVIETS ARE DISSATISFIED WITH PAST PERFORMANCE OF CZECHS, AND HAVE ISSUED THEM STERN WARNINGS. IT IS PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE THAT
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CZECHS HAVE MISSED DELIVERY DEADLINES ON SOVIETS CONTRACTS
AND HAVE ATTEMPTED TO SEND THEM EQUIPMENT THAT COULD NOT

BE SOLD IN WEST.

3. COMMUNIQUE SAYS TALKS WERE HELD IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF FRIENDLY AND MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING, WITH NO REFERENCE TO UNANIMITY OF VIEWS. UNDOUBTEDLY CONTENTIOUS ISSUES EXIST. WE PRESUME CZECHS PRESSED SOVIETS FOR HIGHER RAW MATERIALS AND ENERGY SUPPLIES THAN SOVIETS COULD SPARE, OR THAT SOVIET ASKING PRICE --INVESTMENT IN EXTRACTION AND PROCESSING CAPACITY IN USSR-- WAS HIGHER THAN WHAT CZECHS CONSIDERED EQUITABLE. HOWEVER, WE ASSUME ANY MAJOR DIFFERENCES WERE RESOLVED AND THINGS ARE ACCEPTABLY ON TRACK FOR COMING PERIOD.
PEERRY

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